

The Colostrum Miracle: Too Good to be True?

It seems that almost every day a new substance or product shows up claiming to heal every complaint under the sun. Since I've been writing about natural health, nutrition and alternative medicine for almost twenty years, I've seen a lot of these. To be sure, nowadays a lot of powerful natural remedies are being discovered (or rediscovered) but there are also quite a few that fall short of the extravagant claims they make.

So, when yet another broad-spectrum supplement appears – one that people claim does everything from boost the immune system to help burn fat – I tend to turn sceptical and investigate it very carefully.

That's exactly what happened with colostrum. When I first came across it, the claims seemed simply too good to be true. But then I started to read some of the extensive research about this substance and I started to get excited. Perhaps it is true – maybe there is a complete, natural substance that can help return the body to a state of homeostasis – its natural state of vibrant health and vitality.

Colostrum is the pre-milk fluid produced from the mother's mammary glands during the first 24-48 hours after birth. Colostrum provides life-supporting immune and growth factors that insure the health and vitality of the newborn. Colostrum is so important that most baby animals would simply die without it.

During the fifties and sixties, many doctors recommended against breast-feeding. This was the height of the "arrogance of science" – trying to convince us that man-made formulas could actually be better than natural mother's milk. So, because we weren't breastfed, many of us never got the natural "seeding" – the initial boost to our immune and digestive systems – which colostrum provides. This leaves us vulnerable to diseases, pollutants and allergens that are all around us and increasing in quantity and toxicity every day and every year.

The more I read about colostrum's ability to alleviate and even reverse these problems, the more excited I got.

Nature, in all its wisdom, provided an amazing substance to help infants grow, feel good and resist disease. Now, the medical evidence shows that adults can also get the tremendous wide-ranging benefits that colostrum offers.

A Potent Boost To Immune Function

The onset of almost all infectious and degenerative disease, including cancer and heart disease, is preceded or accompanied by lowered immune system function. Studies show colostrum contains powerful immune factors (Immunoglobulins, Lactoferrin, Cytokines and Interferon) that work to restore potent immune function.

Colostrum also contains PRP (Polyproline-Rich-Peptides)

Shown in medical studies to help boost an under-active immune system. PRP helps restore the thymus gland to optimal functioning capability. The thymus produces the vital T-cells which fight viruses and

antigens. The PRP found in colostrum also helps balance the over-active immune system present in autoimmune diseases – conditions in which the body actually attacks itself. This makes colostrum extremely effective with illnesses such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Fibro myalgia, Multiple Sclerosis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Lupus and Scleroderma. All the anecdotal testimonials point to this substance's amazing ability to prevent disease. People who have been taking colostrum for a while (and these are mostly people who started taking it for some other reason) report that they don't get any more colds or flu. People who start taking colostrum when they are already sick with a viral or bacterial infection report greatly accelerated healing and recovery times.

Colostrum's Growth Factors – Not Just For Newborns

Colostrum contains many important growth factors which promote healing and actually create an anti-aging response. The list of benefits they have been shown to provide is so long I'm going to put it in list form.

Independent medical studies show that colostrum's growth factors:

- Regenerate and accelerate normal growth of aged or injured muscle, bone, cartilage, skin collagen and nerve tissue.
- Help burn fat for fuel instead of muscle tissue in times of fasting (diet)
- Help build and retain lean muscle.
- Repair our body's vital DNA and RNA.
- Balance and regulate blood sugar levels
- Heal burns, surgeries, cuts, abrasions and mouth sores with topical application
- Control infection and pain associated with gingivitis, sensitive teeth and dental work.
- Help regulate blood glucose levels and "brain chemicals", providing alertness and better concentration.
- Help regulate the brain's "feel-good" chemicals to brighten our moods.

So, not only can colostrum make you feel better and heal faster, but it can also help you look better, too? This is when I got really excited. According to articles in "IronMan" and "Muscle and Fitness" (these are serious bodybuilder magazines – I was amazed at how technical and carefully researched the articles were) colostrum is as powerful as illegal, synthetic steroids at creating new muscle mass when bodybuilding exercise is performed!

Plus, remember that this is some-thing that is good for all of you – no side effects, no problems, no contra-indications. If you take antibiotics to combat an infection, you will weaken the immune system, not strengthen it. You will also seriously damage intestinal flora and destroy the acidophilus bacteria that help control harmful bacteria and yeasts in the bowel. If you are foolish enough to take non-prescription steroids (which, believe it or not, many people still do) the side-effects are even worse – hormonal imbalance and endocrine system damage, reproductive system damage and cardiovascular damage.

What's more, the growth factors pre-sent in colostrum have also been shown to have an important anti-aging effect. Skin appears more youthful, age and "liver" spots disappear, bone mass and density is increased and sexual function is improved and restored. Maybe there is a fountain of youth after all!

What I like best about colostrum is that it is a whole, complete natural substance that has been minimally processed. This is not some kind of new natural "designer supplement" made in a laboratory

somewhere – it is nature's own natural wonder drug. It is so broad spectrum because it has to do so much for a newborn mammal. As baby mammals, we are all very weak and feeble when we first come into this world. Nature, in response to this, provided one of the most powerful superfoods in existence to boost us into rapid growth, strong resistance to disease and a great sense of well-being.

Another thing I really like is how extensively it's been researched by the medical community. This is not a new discovery – this is something which is being rediscovered. In fact, the medical use of colostrum goes back thousands of years.

Is Bovine Colostrum Safe and Effective For Humans?

Research has shown that bovine colostrum is easily assailable by humans and is up to 40 times richer in immune factors than human colostrum. Also, the research shows that only cows' colostrum contains special glyco-proteins and protease inhibitors which are extremely effective at protecting the destruction of colostrum's active components by adult human digestive enzymes and stomach acids.

And bovine colostrum is safe for consumption by humans. According to Dr. Robert Preston with the International Institute of Nutritional Research, "Colostrum is so safe, it has been prepared by nature as the first food for infants. It would be hard to imagine any nutritional substance more natural or beneficial."

There have been no contra-indications, side effects or allergies reported through thousands of years of human use of bovine colostrum. And this superfood creates no problems for those with lactose intolerance.

Colostrum's Effectiveness Varies Based On Its Source, And How It Is Processed.

Colostrum must be collected, treated and processed correctly in order to be effective. Results can vary widely based on the quality of the colostrum you take. First, colostrum processed at high heat will lose much or most of its biological activity. It's important to do some research to find commercially available colostrum which has been processed without excessive heat. It's also important to find colostrum which comes from cows that are pesticide, antibiotic and hormone free –essentially "organic". Since the cow is the "factory" for producing colostrum, this factory shouldn't be contaminated with harmful chemicals and unwanted drugs.

Also, recent research has shown that the body's ability to assimilate colostrum is greatly enhanced if it is water-soluble. If it's not readily water-soluble, colostrum won't disperse well in the human bowel, and thus will be minimally effective. In order to be made soluble, colostrum needs to be specially micronised and homogenised. Very few brands currently have this attribute, especially since it is impossible to obtain if the colostrum has ever been frozen. Luckily, it is very easy to test for water solubility – all that is needed is a glass of water!

Finally, if possible, see if you can find colostrum that comes from pasture-fed herds. When a cow eats healthy, green grass, instead of dried, processed feed, it is getting the live enzymes that it is naturally designed to get, and its colostrum contains more of these beneficial enzymes that aid in assimilation by humans. In addition, live food from the pasture contains both beneficial and non-beneficial soil-based organisms. Surprisingly, these both contribute positively to the attributes of the colostrum. The cow develops natural immunity to harmful soil-based bacteria and other pathogens, which is passed on to

its colostrum via the "transfer factor", and creates the same immunity in humans. And beneficial soil-based organisms have recently been shown to create positive conditions in the human bowel. These are, likewise, passed along to the human consumer via the cow's colostrum, further enhancing its many benefits.

Unfortunately, most of the brands available in the U.S. do not meet the above criteria. The industry and infrastructure in this country for collecting and marketing colostrum has been established largely for veterinary purposes. In fact, many of the colostrum brands marketed for human consumption are simply this veterinary grade colostrum re-packaged for human use. This is not necessarily harmful, but this colostrum will not be as effective as it could be. Most, if not all, of this colostrum is frozen before transportation, and once it is frozen, it is virtually impossible to ensure that it will be water-soluble.

In fact, it is virtually impossible to find a domestic U.S. source of colostrum which comes from organic, pasture-fed cows, and meets the other criteria I've outlined above. Even the organic herds in this country are seldom pasture-fed, and these herds are, in any case, too small to provide colostrum in sufficient quantity to ensure a large enough, standardised supply for any kind of widespread distribution. The brands of colostrum which meet the criteria I have outlined above invariably use colostrum from foreign sources –there are a few countries in the world where large enough organic, pasture-fed herds exist, and where "mad cow disease" (bovine spongiform disease) is not a factor.

Try colostrum For Yourself – There's No Health Risk And Usually No Financial Risk Either

Most reputable companies supplying colostrum to the public nowadays offer an unconditional money-back guarantee. And because colostrum is not a drug but a whole, natural food, there's no health risk involved in trying it. So you have nothing to lose – and everything to gain.

"I started taking colostrum as soon as I started reading the amazing findings of the medical research community – and I'm getting great results. My blood sugar levels have stabilised, I'm seeing greater muscle growth from my workouts in just a short time and my energy level and overall sense of well-being and enthusiasm has increased dramatically."

Colostrum Shown To Help Significantly With Intestinal Permeability And Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Intestinal Permeability (leaky gut syndrome) and irritable bowel syndrome are caused mostly by exposure to infectious agents such as viruses, bacteria, yeasts (Candida), parasites and other toxins. Other causes are numerous as well, including poor diet, alcohol consumption, antiinflammatory drugs, cytotoxic drugs, and stress reactions from heart attacks, surgeries, or any form of shock.

This condition can lead to many common problems, such as diarrhoea, poor assimilation of food, and food allergies. It is also often associated with more serious conditions, such as Crohn's Disease, Cholera, Salmonella and E.coli infections, HIV, Arthritis, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Hepatitis, Cystic Fibrosis, and Alcoholism, to name just a few. In addition, intestinal complaints such as this are often a component of many serious auto-immune diseases such as Muscular Dystrophy, Fibro-Myalgia and Scleroderma. In fact, many doctors now believe that most disease originates in the bowel. In light of this new realisation, many health care practitioners are taking these intestinal complaints much more seriously.

Unfortunately, this condition is very common and often goes unrecognised. Several safe, non-invasive tests for intestinal permeability exist today and it is recommended that almost any disease sufferer request a test for the condition from their health practitioner. Research shows that colostrum can actually stop leaky gut syndrome. Its unique combination of immune and growth factors seem tailor-made by nature as a remedy for the condition. Immunoglobulins (IgA, IgG and IgM) lactoferrin and other immune factors can kill, inhibit and prevent the reproduction of pathogenic invaders (infections) and protect against toxins. Colostrum's epithelial growth factors stimulate repair of intestinal membranes at the cellular level. Its anti-inflammatory action reduces cellular spacing, thereby reducing hyper-permeability.

No other single substance has proven as effective with this condition. For optimum health, however, we also recommend a nutrient-rich, fibre-rich diet, high in vegetables, fruits and complex carbohydrates and low in refined flours, alcohol, caffeine, sugars and chemical additives. Since leaky gut syndrome negatively affects assimilation of food, people with this condition are often malnourished, even if they are overweight. A healthy diet, along with steady supplementation with colostrum, can create vastly improved vitality and well-being because of the dramatically enhanced assimilation of nutrients.

Using Colostrum As A Base Supplement Can Increase Effectiveness Of All The Other Supplements You Take

Because colostrum decreases intestinal permeability and greatly enhances the assimilation of all nutrients, it will increase the effectiveness of all other supplements taken.

Assimilation of both macro and micro-nutrients occurs in the intestinal tract. Unfortunately, however, this is also where the majority of disease enters the body. Ironically, the use of antibiotics to counter infections also weakens the ability of the intestines to resist the incursion of new diseases. Antibiotics kill the "friendly" probiotic bacteria which help us attack and kill harmful microbes in the intestines.

Colostrum promotes the re-growth and re-colonisation of beneficial bacteria in the bowel, which also help us break down nutrients for enhanced assimilation, as well as fighting harmful bacterial invaders. In addition, its epithelial growth factor helps repair the mucous-covered lining of the bowel to restore it to optimum function. This lining is a very sophisticated organ –when it is functioning properly it helps form a barrier against toxic and pathogenic invaders, at the same time, it aids assimilation of beneficial nutrients. It's like a gatekeeper on a microscopic level.

So, using colostrum as a "foundation" supplement can enhance the bio-availability of all nutrients, whether from food or supplements, while protecting us from unwanted toxic and pathogenic invaders. This effect is even further enhanced when a daily dose of colostrum is combined with probiotics.

Arthritis And Auto-Immune Response

Anyone who suffers from the pain of arthritis knows that it is almost always accompanied by inflammation. Inflammation and the pain that accompanies it is actually a mild form of autoimmune disease or malfunction. It is a result of the immune system attacking antigens after this response is no longer necessary. Many far more serious autoimmune diseases such as Muscular Dystrophy, ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) and Scleroderma are also a result of an overactive thymus gland and immune system.

Recent research, published in best-selling books, has shown that naturally occurring sulphur compounds like Glucosamine Sulphate have a beneficial effect on inflammation especially that found in arthritis. Colostrum is an excellent source of these sulphur micro-nutrients, including MSM, or Methyl Sulphonyl Methane, which is also getting a lot of national attention at the moment.

In fact, **colostrum is one of the richest known sources of MSM**. It also contains other powerful components including two of the most potent anti-inflammatory compounds known. This makes it far more powerful than the new sulphur-based remedies alone.

Colostrum also contains PRP (Proline-Rich Polypeptide) a compound discovered fairly recently, which has been shown to regulate immune response. PRP inhibits over-production of T-cells and lymphocytes, which are stimulated by antigens and mitogens. It stops the progress of the overly aggressive immune response, and thereby relieves the pain and swelling.

The synergistic combination of colostrum's growth factors, anti-inflammatory components, PRP, sulphur micro-nutrients and other powerful immune factors creates nature's ultimate remedy against inflammation and pain. The growth factors stimulate tissue regeneration and the sulphur micro-nutrients assist specifically in rebuilding cartilage and connective tissue. What's more, colostrum, which comes from cows that eat live raw grasses, contains higher levels of these beneficial sulphur compounds. So look for colostrum which comes from pasture fed cows.

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